SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

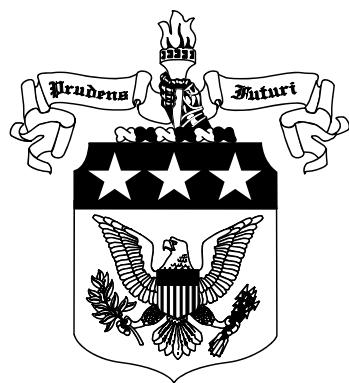BY

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ABSTRACT

On September 11th, 2001, terrorists hijacked commercial airplanes and attacked the U.S. by crashing them into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon and a field in Pennsylvania. Consequently, President Bush announced that the U.S. would use the extent of its capabilities to prevent or preempt possible future attacks, and thus the U.S. became involved in the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT). President Bush vowed that al Qaeda, the terrorist organization responsible for this act, could not be permitted safe havens in other countries and declared that nations would be with the U.S. or against it in the cause to defeat them. Given al Qaeda's propensity to operate in largely ungoverned, austere areas and their proven ability to recruit from such environments, sub-Saharan Africa has become instrumental in the GWOT. The region's vast, desolate areas are ideal for training camps and safe havens, while a large population of able-bodied young men and women could be potential recruits. These factors highlight significant elements that attract al Qaeda and its network to sub-Saharan Africa. This potentially volatile situation presents opportunities for the U.S. to influence the future alignment of countries on this continent without necessarily employing the destructive might of the military.

SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA AND THE GLOBAL WAR ON TERRORISM

The United States of America existed for more than two centuries before

sustaining a major attack directly against one of its contiguous states. The day that

changed history for this heretofore seemingly impenetrable territory occurred at the

hands of terrorists on September 11th, 2001 (9/11). On that day, American Airlines

Flight 11 departed Boston for Los Angeles and was hijacked by suspects armed with

knives. This plane crashed into one of the towers of the World Trade Center. United

Airlines Flight 175 departed Boston for Los Angeles, was hijacked and crashed into the

second tower of the World Trade Center. Both towers were immediately engulfed in

flames and eventually collapsed. American Airlines Flight 77 departed Washington-

Dulles for Los Angeles, was hijacked and crashed into the Pentagon. United Airlines

Flight 93 departed Newark for San Francisco, was hijacked and crashed to the ground

in a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania.[1]

The attacks of 9/11 were the culmination of a thoroughly planned, coordinated

effort that took control of four commercial airplanes and used them as weapons against

the U.S. Having determined that these were terrorist acts perpetrated by members of

the al Qaeda network, President Bush noted that "the deliberate and deadly attacks

which were carried out yesterday [September 11th, 2001] were more than acts of terror.

They were acts of war".[2] With this, the United States was thrust into conflict. Locating

and bringing to justice members of an organization that operated in various parts of the

world, in states which often afforded them safe haven, is an endeavor that presented an

enormous challenge. "This enemy hides in shadows, and has no regard for human life.

This is an enemy who preys on innocent and unsuspecting people, then runs for

cover."[3] Knowing the nature of this adversary, President Bush announced his intentions

to the world by stating in a speech that "we will make no distinction between the

terrorists who committed these acts and those who harbor them".[4]

The Hunt for al Qaeda

With the support of the American public, Congress and leaders of many countries

in the international community, President Bush's order to the military and other

governmental agencies to pursue terrorists associated with the organization responsible

for these attacks, wherever they may be, brought to fruition his declaration to not permit

terrorists a safe haven. Subsequently, during a January 2002 State of the Union

Address, he highlighted several noteworthy changes in the terrorists' situation as a

result of U.S.-led action.

> What we have found in Afghanistan confirms that, far from ending there,
> our war against terror is only beginning. Most of the 19 men who hijacked
> planes on September the 11th were trained in Afghanistan's camps. And
> so were tens of thousands of others. Thousands of dangerous killers,
> schooled in the methods of murder, often supported by outlaw regimes,
> are now spread throughout the world like ticking time bombs, set to go off
> without warning…These enemies view the entire world as a battlefield,
> and we must pursue them wherever they are.[5]

The desire of al Qaeda to operate in remote, desolate and ungoverned territories

was readily apparent following its ejection from Afghanistan. These predilections make

multiple countries in sub-Saharan Africa key to the Global War on Terrorism as they are

potentially vulnerable to exploitation by members of al Qaeda. As Greg Mills notes in

his article, "Africa's New Strategic Significance", "some international terrorists may also

see ungoverned parts of Africa as safe havens or as places that provide opportunities

for attacking Americans and other Western targets on the continent."[6] To be sure,

Osama bin Laden and his followers in al Qaeda have a history with countries in sub-

Saharan Africa, both in terms of terrorist acts against U.S. interests and other Western countries there as well as the establishment of camps and operating bases in some of these countries. From a historical and operational perspective, "al Qaeda's most extreme terrorist attacks prior to September 11 were the August 1998 bombings of U.S. embassies in Dar es Salaam and Nairobi. These attacks cost the lives of 224 people (including 12 Americans) and injured 4,574 more."[7]

The availability of vast, ungoverned areas, combined with al Qaeda's desire to use these types of territories for training bases and camps, increases the likelihood that the al Qaeda network will seek to operate from and influence the populace of sub-Saharan Africa, especially considering Osama bin Laden's previous activities on the African continent.

> Over the last year, the al Qaeda leadership has clearly articulated an effort to incorporate a new and more distant geographical area, North Africa and the Horn, in the global jihadist community. Speeches by bin Laden and al-Zawahiri have repeatedly urged mujahideen to 'go to Sudan' and 'defend Islam in Darfur,' or to 'support your brothers in Somalia.' The Islamic State of Iraq also called for 'Muslims to stand with the brothers in Somalia' in December 2006. In parallel, a prominent al Qaeda ideologue released a document entitled *The Greatest Hopes of Doing Jihad in Somalia*.[8]

Al Qaeda Involvement and U.S. Interests in Africa

The aforementioned statements demonstrate a significant degree of al Qaeda interest in sub-Saharan Africa. This underscores a requirement for U.S. involvement with countries on the African continent so as to assist with creating conditions in which al Qaeda and its affiliates will find the situation in these countries unfavorable. The most productive and enduring set of circumstances for the U.S. and countries in sub-Saharan Africa should result in a long term endeavor that cultivates a relationship with cooperation and mutual support on many different fronts. To do otherwise leaves an

opportunity for terrorists to potentially establish safe havens in the vulnerable areas and thereby solidify their position in countries such as those in the Horn of Africa, Central Africa and West Africa. The noted presence of al Qaeda operatives coupled with other challenges affecting these countries tends to increase the likelihood that they may be susceptible to the influence of terrorist organizations. High unemployment rates, diseases of epidemic proportions and weak institutions are other important factors that contribute to the selection of certain states for operations or safe havens by terrorist organizations. "Poverty does not make poor people into terrorists and murderers. Yet poverty, weak institutions, and corruption can make weak states vulnerable to terrorist networks and drug cartels within their borders."[9]

Regarding the Horn of Africa,

> in 1989 the National Islamic Front seized power in Sudan and set out to build an Islamist state – home to radical Muslim groups from around the world. During the 1990s, Sudan openly provided a safe haven to terrorists including Osama bin Laden and al Qaeda, and acted as a gateway for these group[s] to operate in the greater Horn of Africa.[10]

With a familiarity of the terrain and knowledge of the environment, al Qaeda operatives could make the sub-Saharan Africa countries pivotal in the Global War on Terrorism. To influence this outcome, it is essential that the U.S. and other nations endeavoring to prevent the spread of al Qaeda networks on the African continent recognize al Qaeda's history in the region and the exploitable conditions that persist. For years, these countries have shown that they do not have the overall capacity or capability to change the course that makes them susceptible to the influence of al Qaeda and terrorist organizations within their borders.

"Indeed, for years the Horn of Africa, filled with weak, corrupt, and warring states, was seen as fertile ground for Islamists. Yet American responses to the regional

terrorist threat – like the cruise missile attack on Sudan in the wake of the embassy bombings – were limited and unsustained."[11] The terrorist organizations have learned that operating in the shadows of a government without strong institutions that can identify and effectively employ countermeasures against their presence will perpetuate situations favorable to al Qaeda and conversely produce a situation that is deleterious to the Global War on Terrorism.

"For over a decade, the United States has considered the Horn of Africa – Kenya, Ethiopia, Djibouti, Somalia, Eritrea, and Sudan – a major source of terrorism. Following the 9-11 attacks against the United States, the Horn has come under increased scrutiny as a strategic focal point in the war against terrorism."[12] Most of the sub-Saharan states, especially those in the Horn, are affected by a number of circumstances that the terrorists find beneficial, and which complicate U.S. efforts. Whether using the confines of a desolate area to set up training or base camp locations for members of al Qaeda as in Sudan, taking advantage of ineffective security to commit terrorist acts against the interests of Western nations as in Kenya, or using Djibouti as a port of entry through East Africa, these countries in the Horn of Africa have a demonstrably significant role in the Global War on Terrorism. The manner in which the U.S. leverages its ability to influence conditions that make countries in sub-Saharan Africa attractive to terrorist organizations will impact greatly on whether these countries remain vulnerable to al Qaeda and its terrorist network, or whether they will contribute to the Global War on Terrorism by making conditions unfavorable for the terrorists.

According to Tatah Mentan in *Dilemmas of Weak States*, terrorist organizations take advantage of Africa's porous borders, weak and corrupt law enforcement and

security services, and nascent judicial institutions to move men, weapons, and money around the globe. This then provides a base for operations in a sovereign state that the terrorists exploit as a level of protection for their own security. Further, the terrorists also take advantage of poor, disillusioned populations, often with religious or ethnic grievances, to recruit for their jihad. These terrorist networks are exploiting Africa thoroughly, and in the process, they are directly threatening the national security of declared target groups such as the United States and Israel.[13]

While the conditions that could be used to advance terrorism and the goals of al Qaeda are readily apparent in the Horn of Africa, these conditions also exist in other parts of the continent as well. Princeton N. Lyman and J. Stephen Morrison, in their *Foreign Affairs* article, assert that "the Bush administration has focused on destroying al Qaeda in East Africa, but it has been slow to address less visible terrorist threats elsewhere on the continent…if Washington continues to underplay the terrorist threat in Africa, its worldwide strategy against terrorism will falter – and the consequences may be dire indeed".[14] Al-Qaeda's ability to exploit multiple locations simultaneously illustrates the need for a coherent plan to address all areas that are affected by or susceptible to the terrorists' influence so that the approach does not simply cause the activity to move from one location to another within sub-Saharan Africa.

> Countering the rise of grass-roots extremism has been a central part of U.S. strategy in the Middle East, but the same has not generally been true for Africa. In Nigeria, for example, a potent mix of communal tensions, radical Islamism, and anti-Americanism has produced a fertile breeding ground for militancy and threatens to tear the country apart.[15]

According to a 2005 *Foreign Policy* article, the United Nations reported that al Qaeda had set up bases in Nigeria and that terrorist attacks within the region were becoming more common.[16] With the exception of Nigeria, Lyman and Morrison attribute

the presence of terrorist organizations to factors other than religion and politics, stating that "outside of Nigeria, therefore, the terrorist threat in West and Central Africa comes less from religion and politics than from lack of sovereign control and general debility…This highly unstable situation has given rise to a dangerous chaos in which criminal syndicates partner with rogue leaders and al Qaeda".[17]

The Diplomatic, Informational, Military and Economic (DIME) Assessment

There is a complicated process by which al Qaeda and its affiliates operate: they use weak states with vast territories on which they can function almost with impunity; they develop complex webs to generate finances for their cause; and they exploit the conditions of the indigenous population in an attempt to gain their direct or indirect support. In prosecuting the Global War on Terrorism, President George W. Bush asserted that "we will not allow terrorists to threaten African people or to use Africa as a base to threaten the world".[18] The effective counter to al Qaeda's complicated process will require the deliberate and widespread application of national powers in order to positively influence the situation on the African continent. The intricacies involved with combating the al Qaeda network in sub-Saharan Africa will necessitate an involvement of all U.S. instruments of national power. Locating al Qaeda in remote places is a difficult task due in large part to the terrorist organization's ability to operate below a threshold that would make them readily identifiable or reveal their intentions. In the *National Security Strategy*, March 2006, President Bush notes that:

> Many of the problems we face – from the threat of pandemic disease, to proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, to terrorism, to human trafficking, to natural disasters – reach across borders. Effective multinational efforts are essential to solve these problems. Yet history has shown that only when we do our part will others do theirs. America must continue to lead.[19]

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Further, "the United States recognizes that our security depends upon partnering with Africans to strengthen fragile and failing states and bring ungoverned areas under the control of effective democracies".[20] The foregoing statement infers that U.S. involvement with countries in Africa will require a holistic approach that seeks to improve institutions for security and governance of their sovereign states. In turn, these countries can facilitate the removal of terrorist organizations and preclude their return. The development or strengthening of sub-Saharan Africa's capacity to oversee this process requires an overall approach that employs key support from the U.S. instruments of national power.

According to Peter Chaveas, in an article written for *Harvard International Review*, an honest accounting would quickly demonstrate that for years, the United States has spent far more in responding to African crises than it has in helping African states build the tools that could prevent such crises in the first place. Some of the problems in sub-Saharan Africa, which include poor governance, disease, porous borders and internecine violence between members of the indigenous population, have deep roots. Africa's critical issues will not be resolved quickly, nor are they amenable to "magic bullet" solutions. In addition, U.S. strategic interests in Africa are highly unlikely to diminish in the foreseeable future. Given these two facts, the United States' best possible strategy in the region going into the future is one of long-term and sustained support of Africa's own internal development and security initiatives.[21]

The most appropriate remedy for the situation in sub-Saharan Africa seems to require a strong, evenly distributed application of resources and efforts across the entire spectrum of U.S. instruments of national power. A diplomatic effort will be essential for

coordinating with partner countries and implementing procedures for other capabilities. The development of solid, direct diplomatic relations with the countries most affected by the conditions that make them susceptible to exploitation by terrorists is where the more immediate action should occur. Moreover, this effort would ideally enlist the support of other nations, especially on the African continent, so as to provide a reinforcing ring of support and a bastion to advance efforts that will prevent the expansion or movement of terrorist activity from one sub-Saharan Africa country to another.

In the 21st century, the significance of strategic communication and information dissemination cannot be overstated. Al Qaeda and its affiliates have clearly demonstrated their ability to use the media in pursuit of their goals. Their use of the internet to propagate views, inform followers, and to display video recordings of their attacks against Westerners, are examples of the terrorist organization using the latest in information technology to communicate with a broad audience, potentially with global reach. Osama bin Laden has been equally cunning in his use of the television and news media by periodically releasing audio or video recordings to communicate his message with the outside world. As such, each instance can serve to further the cause of the terrorists by appealing to some for recruitment, or possibly conveying coded messages that may be specific communications with certain segments of the organization.

The information arena will require a significant effort from the U.S. to counter the successes gained by al Qaeda. During a speech by U.S. Secretary of Defense Robert M. Gates, he remarked that:

> Public relations was invented in the United States, yet we are miserable at communicating to the rest of the world what we are about as a society and

a culture, about freedom and democracy, about our policies and our goals. It is just plain embarrassing that al Qaeda is better at communicating its message on the internet than America. As one foreign diplomat asked a couple of years ago, 'how has one man in a cave managed to out-communicate the world's greatest communication society?'[22]

Having an ability to collect and analyze information for security purposes is paramount. The establishment of an intelligence capability must exist as the foundation for the police to prevent or solve crimes, especially when it relates to the activities of terrorist organizations. The ability to discern and accurately anticipate some of the criminal activity associated with terrorism in order to prevent successful attacks will directly benefit the security situation. Likewise, intelligence must undergird operations for the military forces. Intelligence is essential for the armed forces to conduct operations, whether they are protecting the nation's borders from aggressors or conducting operations against terrorist organizations and providing requisite security for the nation's citizens. The 2002 *National Security Strategy of the United States* announced that "together with our European allies, we must help strengthen Africa's fragile state, help build indigenous capability to secure porous borders, and help build up the law enforcement and intelligence infrastructure to deny havens for terrorists".[23]

An effective military capability is vital for maintaining the sovereignty of a nation and ensuring that unpopulated territories do not become occupied by terrorist organizations for use as safe havens or training camps. To this end, Peter Chaveas notes that, "efforts to address the security challenges that affect U.S. interests can only be successful if they embrace the concept of 'human security,' which speaks to the interrelatedness of security, development, and the protection of civilians. Stability is the essential foundation for development and security for individual citizens".[24]

Countries in sub-Saharan Africa are disproportionately affected by circumstances which lend themselves to an ineffective security apparatus. The absence of effective governmental institutions to raise and oversee the military and police, which therefore translates into an inability to hold them accountable for transgressions, and the absence of a framework for them to support the nations' laws and policies, contribute to this factor.

The development of a professional security structure is a complex endeavor with several inextricably linked aspects. In addition to the requirement for political institutions that must produce policy and laws to which the military must adhere, civilian leadership exercising control of the military is also desirable. In countries prone to military coups and violations of individuals' rights, professionalization of the security forces should be at the forefront of any training or developmental programs. In the end, the objective is to reduce the possibilities for politicization of this critical capability. According to a Congressional Research Service Report for Congress,

> building partnership capacity is a key goal of U.S. military strategy in Africa and will consequently be a key mandate for [U.S. Africa Command] AFRICOM…the Command would concentrate much of its energies and resources on training and assistance to professionalize local militaries so that they can better ensure stability and security on the continent.[25]

The dire economic conditions facing Africa are long-standing and far-reaching. Many of the sub-Saharan Africa countries find themselves at the lower end of the economic spectrum. The extant conditions leave a large portion of the population without the means to provide for themselves or their families financially. This situation permeates their society, and while an earlier acknowledgement recognized that poverty does not necessarily cause terrorism, at the same time, it must be recognized as a potentially exploitable trait to involve those impacted by these conditions, wittingly or

unwittingly, in a cause that could benefit terrorist networks. In 2007, Gregory E. Glaros

noted that

> Africa remains the world's poorest and most underdeveloped continent
> globally, 25 of its 53 nations are among the poorest in the world. If the
> United States is committed to aid that is targeted at judicial reform,
> democratic institutions, parliamentary governance and human rights, then
> the focus of AFRICOM must include clear economic goals for African civil
> society.[26]

More directly, J. Brian Atwood, in a *Journal of International Affairs* article, asserted

that it has become painfully obvious that prominent terrorist networks like al Qaeda

have exploited the existence of pervasive poverty and the absence of democratic

governance structures, finding safe harbor in sub-Saharan Africa countries that include

Sudan and Somalia. Moreover, he provides a personal account of efforts necessary to

adapt policies and bureaucratic organizations to the urgent need to prevent conflict and

build structures of peace, or peace and stability operations. He cites the efforts of the

United Nations and other governments which offer the perspective of a strong advocate

of combining development cooperation with diplomatic and security interventions

needed to counter terrorism and to prevent or mitigate violent conflict.[27]

The Approach

The countries in sub-Saharan Africa represent a complex nexus of challenges that

make them vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist organizations. Consequently,

endeavors by the U.S. to thwart terrorist activity and prevent such organizations from

operating on the continent of Africa will require a well researched effort to fully

understand the underlying factors affecting Africa's circumstances, adequate resources

and a plan that must be executed adroitly. In the end, it would be more advantageous

to the U.S. to prevent the problems from developing into a crisis rather than responding

to them afterwards. General Charles F. Wald, as the Deputy Commander of U.S.

European Command (EUCOM), wrote in an article that

> leaders at USEUCOM also realized that the preventive focus of Phase Zero is less costly (in both blood and treasure) than a reactive approach to crisis. At the very least, Phase Zero helps set conditions for an easier transition to a more comprehensive U.S. intervention in a crisis. The primary goal of Phase Zero, however, is to invest fewer resources in a precrisis situation to avoid an exponentially larger expenditure later. Phase Zero encompasses all activities prior to the beginning of Phase I - that is, everything that can be done to prevent conflicts from developing in the first place…It consists of shaping operations that are continuous and adaptive. Its ultimate goal is to promote stability and peace by building capacity in partner nations that enables them to be cooperative, trained and prepared to help prevent or limit conflicts.[28]

In its capacity as the Geographic Combatant Command with responsibility for

some of the countries comprising the continent of Africa, EUCOM leaders recognized

the strategic value of countries in this region and noted concerns with the growing

challenges. In testimony to the Senate Armed Services Committee in 2006, General

Bantz J. Craddock, as Commander, EUCOM, stated that the increasing strategic

significance of Africa will continue to pose the greatest security stability challenge in the

EUCOM area of responsibility. The large ungoverned area in Africa, HIV/AIDS

epidemic, corruption, weak governance, and poverty that exist throughout the continent

are challenges that are key factors in the security stability issues that affect every

country in Africa. In the same year, his predecessor, General James L. Jones, had

pointed out that the EUCOM staff was spending more than half their time on Africa

issues, up from almost none three years prior.[29]

An investment of time and effort on the front end could prevent the need to

become involved in crises or conflicts on the back end, and countries in sub-Saharan

Africa are replete with opportunities to apply this approach. General Wald cited a

Theater Security Cooperation strategy in which EUCOM aims to protect U.S. interests, promote stability, and defeat terrorism and its underlying causes. In this case, EUCOM is the American military component of the Trans-Sahara Counterterrorism Initiative, a long-term U.S. Government program designed to help the countries of Trans-Sahara Africa cooperate to control the undergoverned spaces of their interiors. The Trans-Sahara region stretches from Senegal and Mauritania on Africa's west coast, across Mali, Algeria, Niger, Nigeria, and Chad. The area is sparsely populated, largely barren, and difficult for local governments to control. Accordingly, a variety of transnational terrorist groups such as the Algerian-based "Salafist Group for Preaching and Combat" (commonly known by the French acronym GSPC) have sought sanctuary there. The entire region is crisscrossed with ancient smuggling routes for moving people, weapons, and other contraband.[30]

U.S. strategic interests in Africa along with the unique issues on that continent create a challenging situation for our nation as it seeks to team with sub-Saharan Africa countries to prevent terrorists from operating on their territory. "As Washington begins to understand the strategic importance of Africa – from keeping al Qaeda from gaining new footholds to the fact that the U.S. now imports nearly 22 percent of its oil from African countries – the arrival of an Africa Command was just a matter of time".[31] The establishment of a command to specifically address the challenges of Africa represents an attempt by the U.S. to ameliorate some of the unfavorable conditions that impact sub-Saharan Africa, which makes it vulnerable to exploitation by terrorist organizations.

> This new command will strengthen our security cooperation with Africa
> and help to create new opportunities to bolster the capabilities of our
> partners in Africa. Africa Command will enhance our efforts to help bring
> peace and security to the people of Africa and promote our common goals

of development, health, education, democracy, and economic growth in Africa.[32]

A single command having responsibility for all countries on the continent, with the exception of Egypt, improves unity of command, provides a single four star advocate to convey issues of the continent to policymakers, and raises the priority of countries on the continent by placing them under a single command that is focused primarily on their issues. Egypt, owing to its relationship with the Middle East in general and Israel in particular, remains covered by U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM). The remaining African countries currently under CENTCOM as well as those under EUCOM and U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM) will become the responsibility of AFRICOM. AFRICOM will be temporarily located in Stuttgart, Germany, as a sub-unified command, but is scheduled to possibly move to Africa, at a location not yet determined, and be operational by 1 October 2008.[33]

The unique challenges presented by the circumstances in sub-Saharan Africa necessitate an equally unique set of responses, which must be wholeheartedly applied to situations in these countries in order to positively influence the outcome there during the Global War on Terrorism. Aside from the issues previously mentioned as challenges on the African continent, China has also raised the level of competition with the U.S. in this region. "Beijing has secured many African alliances, public and private, through direct aid and concessionary loans with 'no political strings' attached. As Premier Wen told African delegates at the 2003 China-Africa Cooperation Summit at Addis Ababa, 'we do offer our assistance with the deepest sincerity and without any political conditions'."[34]

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Power and Soft Power in U.S. Africa Command

The confluence of issues relating to ungoverned land areas, poverty, disease and the presence of terrorist networks or other potential competitor countries in sub-Saharan Africa will fully test the efficacy of AFRICOM. Sean McFate writes in his article, "U.S. Africa Command: A New Strategic Paradigm", that AFRICOM must begin by adopting a new security model, one that regards security and development as inextricably linked and mutually reinforcing. This linkage is the nucleus of the security-development nexus, the strategic paradigm most likely to produce more durable security in Africa.[35]

The long term effective solution to the problems facing sub-Saharan Africa will involve all instruments of U.S. national power. In order to eradicate a potential threat and ensure that it does not recur, a partnership between the U.S. and the countries affected by the untoward activities must be solidified. To facilitate this, AFRICOM is envisaged to have the traditional roles of a geographic combatant command, but also a broader soft power mandate to build a stable security environment. It will incorporate a larger civilian component from other U.S. government interagencies to address those challenges. "Soft power is what makes America's ideas and society more attractive…and includes measures such as cultural exchanges and public diplomacy. Soft power is applied consistently over the long term, and is designed to encourage cooperation and accommodation."[36] According to General William E. Ward, Commander, AFRICOM, the DOD will be part of a "three-pronged" U.S. government approach, with DOD, through AFRICOM, taking the lead on security issues, but playing a supporting role to the Department of State, which conducts diplomacy, and United States Agency for International Development (USAID), which implements development programs.[37]

<u>An Enduring Commitment for Partnership</u>

Though the strategic interests in Africa were crystallized following the terrorist attacks against the U.S. on 9/11, Africa is of strategic significance not only as a way of helping to reduce the threat to the U.S. by preventing al Qaeda and its terrorist networks from exploiting the conditions there, but it is also a continent with other positive opportunities and potential. The 2002 *National Security Strategy* noted that "in Africa, promise and opportunity sit side by side with disease, war and desperate poverty. This threatens both a core value of the United States – preserving human dignity – and our strategic priority – combating global terror".[38] In order for the U.S. and the sub-Saharan Africa countries to establish a meaningful and cooperative relationship, the U.S. will have to demonstrate, through its actions and a commitment for long term involvement, a level of preparedness and perseverance to address the challenges facing that continent.

At the same time, the U.S. will have to negotiate a narrow path to show that its presence is not imperialistic. Some will find the recent U.S. interest in Africa tied to its natural resources, especially oil. This, combined with the continent's history under colonial rule, means that actions of the U.S. will likely be scrutinized in a way that only time, sincere efforts to improve the situation, and open communications can overcome. Sean McFate noted that "the U.S. interest in African oil is well known and perceived to be predatory; and Africa's colonial past has ingrained distrust in its leaders".[39]

The countries in sub-Saharan Africa are ideally suited to a nonkinetic approach; the result of which should yield enormous dividends for the U.S. in its efforts to assist them with preventing terrorists from operating within the borders of their countries. This, in turn, directly impacts efforts of the U.S. in the Global War on Terrorism. The

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emphasis of soft power with dedicated resources identified to improve each of the instruments of power in the affected country will be crucial for success. It is essential that the U.S. and sub-Saharan Africa countries form a relationship that ultimately results in a mutually supporting partnership. Likewise, it is essential that the development of the instruments of national power occurs simultaneously so that one does not outgrow the other in a way that becomes problematic. To enable these institutions to take root will improve the probability of long term stability with professional organizations to make, implement, and enforce the law while protecting the countries' citizens and their rights, as well as improve their capacity to properly oversee their countries' sovereignty and other functions of the government.

Regarding the strategic significance of Africa, as it relates to the Global War on Terrorism, British Foreign Office Minister Chris Mullin summed it up by stating that it is a little known fact that there have been more al Qaeda attacks in Africa than anywhere else in the world. He notes that in parts of Africa such as Somalia, entire societies have imploded, making them a ready breeding ground for terrorism. Moreover, he asserts that it is not widely realized that there are more Muslims south of the Sahara than in the Middle East and that most of them are moderates; furthermore, he argues, if we want them to stay that way, we cannot neglect Africa.[40]

Conclusion

Members of the al Qaeda network have operated in several countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Sudan and Somalia. They have specifically targeted U.S. interests in Africa by bombing U.S. embassies and seeking to use locations there to train terrorists for acts of violence to be carried out against Westerners. Since the

attacks against the U.S. on September 11th, 2001 and subsequently by the U.S. during the Global War on Terrorism, the U.S. has embarked upon a campaign to deny safe havens to al Qaeda terrorists. Sub-Saharan Africa is replete with countries affected by conditions that appeal to al Qaeda and terrorist organizations, including ungoverned spaces and porous borders. The United States has thus moved those countries to a higher priority and codified its strategic interests in Africa. Moreover, the U.S. has established Africa Command (AFRICOM) to assist with overseeing and pursuing policy goals that relate to the continent. Importantly, the command is uniquely designed with a significant senior civilian presence from other U.S. government interagencies to assist with the development of long term programs and relationships for the challenges on the African continent. The use of a nonkinetic approach with an enduring relationship in which the partnering countries can improve their instruments of national power will likely yield the greatest dividends for the U.S. in the Global War on Terrorism and beyond.

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